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THE BUSH BUDGET: SHORTCHANGING SCHOOL REFORM



Tuesday, February 12, 2002

SENATOR EDWARD M. KENNEDY (D-MA)
Chairman, Senate Health, Education, Labor and
Pensions Committee

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Ranking Member, House Education and Workforce
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BUSH BUDGET SHORTCHANGES EDUCATION

February 12, 2001

The Bush Budget: The Wrong Priorities

The Smallest Increase for Education in Seven Years. President Bush proposes just a 2.8% increase in education (or \$1.4 billion)—less than one-fourth of the 13% average increase over the last seven years. Just one month after signing most significant education law in 30 years, the President's budget takes a large step backward. Accountability will work only when matched with adequate resources. Our schools, teachers and students were promised these resources when the law was written.

Diverts \$4 Billion to Private Schools. The President's budget proposes two new private-school voucher initiatives—a demonstration program and a tuition tax credit—that will cost \$4 billion over five years. These proposals betray the Leave No Child Behind Act's commitment to improving the

education of all children. The \$4 billion in public funds they siphon off to pay private school tuitions has already been promised by the President and Congress to helping public schools defray the costs of special education, raising the salaries of our nation's underpaid public school teachers, and meet the reform goals in the new education law.

Spends More than 50 Times More on Additional Tax Cuts for the Top 1% than on Our Schools. This year, President Bush proposes an additional \$110 billion on tax cuts for the top 1% of taxpayers over 10 years (including the cost of more interest on the national debt). Even if his \$1.4 billion increase for education is sustained over 10 years, it will still be less than 2% the size of the second Bush tax cut for the top 1% of taxpayers.

Cuts \$1.7 billion in Education Programs. The President's budget would cut 40 education programs totaling \$1 billion and cut an additional 16 education programs to save \$700 million. The eliminated programs include Civic Education, Dropout Prevention, the National Writing Project, and Preparing Tomorrow's Teachers to Use Technology. The Fund for the Improvement of Education—which funds initiatives including small schools, arts education, community technology centers, and Javits gifted and talented education—is cut by 90%.

The Smallest Increase for Education in 7 Years

Bush Proposal for 2003	+ \$1.4 billion	+ 2.8 %
2002	+ \$6.7 billion	+ 16 %
2001	+ \$6.6 billion	+ 19 %
2000	+ \$2.1 billion	+ 6 %
1999	+ \$3.6 billion	+ 12 %
1998	+ \$3.3 billion	+ 12 %
1997	+ \$3.6 billion	+ 16 %

Fails to Fund School Reform

Fails to Meet the Commitments of Bipartisan Education Reform. Just one month ago, Congress and the President enacted the most important education reform legislation in 30 years. This bipartisan law is based on the principle that, with adequate resources, real reform is possible. But rather than building on this progress, the President's budget cuts initiatives in The No Child Left Behind Act by a net total of \$90 million. The Bush Budget:

- **Freezes Teacher Quality.** The Teacher Quality initiative helps states and school districts reduce class sizes and better recruit and train teachers. The Bush budget freezes Teacher Quality at \$2.85 billion. Due to inflation and growing school enrollments, this freeze is a disguised budget cut.

- **Loses Ground on Title I.** Last year, Congress and the President boosted Title I by \$1.6 billion, an 18% increase. The Bush budget fails to sustain this momentum, requesting only an additional \$1 billion, or a 10% increase. Under the Bush budget, the number of poor children left behind by Title I is projected to grow by 250,000.
- **Provides No Funds for School Modernization.** Last year, President Bush fought to repeal the federal initiative to modernize America's schools and provide safe, modern places to learn. His budget plan includes no dedicated resources to address the \$127 billion backlog in school repairs.
- **Fails Promise to Fully Fund Special Education.** Last year, Congress and the President boosted special ed funding by \$1.3 billion, a 19% increase that still leaves the federal commitment to special education deeply under-funded. The budget contains only \$1 billion more for special ed, a 13% increase. At this rate, it will take 15 years to fully fund the federal commitment to special education. If the President had helped enact the bipartisan Harkin-Hagel proposal last year, schools would receive \$2.8 billion more in special ed funding this year than the budget contains.
- **Freezes After-School Programs.** The 21st Century Community Learning Centers program provides safe, healthy places for over 2 million children to learn after school. The Bush budget freezes this popular initiative for the second year in a row at \$1 billion. The No Child Left Behind Act called for \$1.5 billion for after-school programs this year.
- **Cuts Education Technology by \$122 Million.** The Bush budget cuts \$122 million from federal educational technology initiatives, eliminating the Preparing Tomorrow's Teachers to Use Technology, Star Schools, and Community Technology Centers initiatives. President Bush freezes other federal investments in educational technology. Studies show that technology can substantially raise student achievement.
- **Cuts Safe and Drug-Free Schools by \$103 Million.** The Bush budget cuts Safe and Drug-Free Schools by \$103 million (14%). This program helps make our schools safe by supporting comprehensive, integrated approaches to drug and violence prevention.
- **Fails to Increase Bilingual Education.** The Bush budget freezes Bilingual Education at \$665 million, even though the number of students with limited English proficiency is growing rapidly.
- **Slows Growth of Reading First.** Last year Congress provided a \$614 million boost for reading programs, over a 200% increase. President Bush is asking for only a \$100 million or 11% increase.

Freezes Financial Aid for College Students

Halts Progress on Pell Grants. Pell college scholarships for low-income students are the foundation of federal efforts to ensure that all qualified Americans can attend college. The purchasing power of Pell grants has fallen to about half its level 25 years ago. Students are now borrowing an average of \$16,000 to pay for college, approximately \$4,000 more than only four years ago.

• **This Year, the President's Budget Punts on the Pell Shortfall.** Last year, when the current budget was written, the Bush Administration opposed additional funding to allow an increase in the size of Pell scholarships, but Congress increased the grants by \$250 anyway (to a maximum of \$4,000). Now, after an increase in enrollment for low-income students, his budget asks Congress to fund the program by rewriting the budget he signed only weeks ago and cutting mentoring, teacher training, and school safety programs. Robbing Peter to pay Paul is not the answer. President Bush has missed his chance to offer a constructive solution to the Pell shortfall.

• **Next Year, the Bush Budget Proposes to Freeze the Size of Pell Grants.** President Bush's budget provides a 5% (or \$549 million) increase for Pell to accommodate growing enrollments. However, he freezes the maximum Pell grant at \$4,000, leaving low-income college students to lose more ground.

Eliminates State Scholarships Program. President Bush's budget eliminates the \$67 million Leveraging Educational Assistance Partnerships (LEAP) initiative, which encourages states to establish college scholarships. By leveraging state dollars, LEAP provided \$171 million to low-income students last year. Although he eliminates federal support for state scholarships to needy students, President Bush has promised a new initiative to support state merit-based scholarships.

Freezes Other Student Aid Programs. The Bush budget freezes work-study opportunities, supplemental educational opportunity scholarships for low-income students, and Perkins college loans.

Provides Only a 3.5% Increase for Historically Black Colleges and Universities. President Bush proposes only a 3.5% (or \$9 million) increase for Historically Black Colleges, Universities and Graduate Institutions to \$264 million. In contrast, the last five budgets increased HBCU funding by 12%, 15%, 9%, 28%, and 11%.

Provides Only a 3.5% Increase for Hispanic-Serving Institutions. The Bush budget increases funding for Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSIs) by 3.5%, or \$3 million, to \$89 million. The last five budgets increased HSI funding by 11%, 133%, 51%, 62%, and 26%.

Deep Cuts in Department of Labor's Workforce Investment Programs. More than 80% of manufacturers face a shortage of qualified job candidates, according to the National Association of Manufacturers. Despite this imperative, the Bush budget cuts Youth Opportunity training grants by \$180 million (80%), as well as Youth Activities by \$127 million, Adult Employment by \$50 million, and other employment and training programs by \$184 million.

Chart of Major Education Programs in the Bush Education Budget

PRESIDENT BUSH ON EDUCATION: *The Rhetoric and the Reality*

RHETORIC ON EDUCATION FUNDING: "President Bush has proposed a generous budget for education in 2003." -- Deputy Secretary of Education

Bill Hanson, February 4, 2002.

REALITY: The Bush budget proposes the smallest increase for education in seven years: only 2.8%. This budget does not even maintain current services after inflation and enrollment growth. This proposal includes the smallest increase for K-12 education since 1988.

REALITY: President Bush's budget cuts \$90 million from the bipartisan education law he signed just last month. These cuts are among the total of \$1.7 billion in cuts, including Dropout Prevention, the National Writing Project, Civic Education, and Preparing Tomorrow's Teachers to Use Technology.

RHETORIC ON TEACHERS: *"We must upgrade our teacher colleges and teacher training and launch a major recruiting drive with a great goal for America: a quality teacher in every classroom." -- President Bush, January 29, 2002*

REALITY: The Bush budget includes no new initiatives for teachers and freezes the teacher quality initiative created by the No Child Left Behind Act. Due to inflation and growing school enrollments, this budget freeze is a disguised budget cut.

RHETORIC ON SPECIAL EDUCATION: *"The federal program for special needs children was established by the law known as IDEA, the Individuals With Disabilities Education Act. My 2003 budget requests an additional \$1 billion for IDEA, as well -- an important increase." President Bush, January 19, 2002.*

REALITY: Last year, President Bush failed to support the bipartisan Harkin-Hagel legislation, which would have provided \$2.8 billion more for special education than the Bush budget does.

REALITY: The Bush budget provides less than half the resources needed to meet the federal promise to this program. At this rate, it will take 15 years to fully fund special education.

RHETORIC ON TITLE I: *"We have a special obligation to disadvantaged children to close the achievement gap in our nation. In my next budget, I will propose an increase of \$1 billion for the federal program that aids disadvantaged schoolchildren." -- President Bush, January 19, 2002.*

REALITY: President Bush's 2003 increase is only about half of last year's increase and falls over \$5 billion short of the promise made by The No Child Left Behind Act.

REALITY: Under the Bush budget, the number of poor children left behind would increase by 250,000. Although President Bush's budget would serve 400,000 more poor children next year, the number of poor children in the U.S. is projected to grow by 650,000 children.

Prepared by the Democratic staffs of the Committee on Education and

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